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Message Text

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12
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00

SAJ-01 SS-15 NSC-05 SAM-01 /063 W
---------- 064719
P R 070800Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3889
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY HELSINKI
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L STOCKHOLM 642

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS, SW
SUBJECT: SWEDISH EFFORTS TO SELL VIGGEN AS F-104 REPLACEMENT
CRITICIZED

1. SUMMARY. SWEDISH EFFORTS TO COMPETE IN THE STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT COMPETITION BY ASSURING POTENTIAL NATO BUYERS THAT DELIVERIES WOULD BE ASSURED EVEN DURING WARTIME HAS PROVOKED CRITICISM FROM BOTH THE SOVIET ORGAN IZVESTIA AND THE LEFTWING OF THE SWEDISH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WHO VIEW SUCH DEVELOPMENTS AS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO SWEDISH NEUTRALITY. END SUMMARY.

2. SWEDISH EFFORTS TO SELL THE SAAB VIGGEN AIRCRAFT TO FOUR NATO COUNTRIES AS THE REPLACEMENT FOR THE F-104 HAVE RUN INTO BOTH DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN CRITICISM OVER THE POSSIBLE IMPLICATIONS FOR SWEDISH NEUTRALITY OF SUCH SALES. THE LATEST CRITICISM COMES FROM THE SOVIET GOVERN-
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MENT ORGAN IZVESTIA AND FROM THE SWEDISH AFTERNOON DAILY

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AFTONBLADET, REPRESENTING THE LEFTWING OF THE RULING SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY.

3. TOUCHING OFF THE CONTROVERSY WAS A STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER SVEN ANDERSSON ON JAN. WQ THAT SWEDEN HAD GIVEN "CERTAIN GUARANTEES" TO THE FOUR NATO COUNTRIES CONSIDERING PURCHASE OF A NEW PLANE TO REPLACE THE STARFIGHTER (HOLLAND, BELGIUM, NORWAY, AND DENMARK). THE FOREIGN MINISTER ADDED THAT SUCH GUARANTEES WOULD BE "IN CONFORMITY WITH OUR POLICY OF NON-PARTICIPATION IN ALLIANCES, INTERNATIONAL RULES, AND THE CHARTER OF THE UNITED NATIONS," AS WELL AS WITHIN THE GUIDELINES FOR SWEDISH ARMS EXPORTS ESTABLISHED IN 1971 BY THE GOS.

4. ATTEMPTING TO BOLSTER SWEDISH EFFORTS TO SELL THE VIGGEN TO THE FOUR NATO COUNTRIES THE FORNMIN IMPLICITLY ASSURED THEM THAT SWEDEN WOULD DELIVER THE AIRCRAFT TO THEM EVEN IN THE EVENT OF A EUROPEAN CONFLICT. IT WAS THIS POINT WHICH EVIDENTLY DISPLEASED MOSCOW. AS REPORTED BY THE MODERATE (CONSERVATIVE) DAILY SVENSKA DAGBLADET, THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT ORGAN IZVESTIA ON FEB. 5 ASKED: "HOW ARE THE GUARANTEES COMPATIBLE WITH SWEDISH NEUTRALITY, WHICH IS CONSIDERED TO BE SUCH AN IMPORTANT FACTOR FOR STABILITY AND PEACE IN NORTHERN EUROPE?" THE PAPER CITES AN AFTONBLADET ARTICLE OF JAN. 23 AS INTERPRETING ANDERSSON'S REFERENCE TO "GUARANTEES" AS MEANING THAT THE GOS WOULD DELIVER THE VIGGEN TO THE FOUR NATO COUNTRIES EVEN IN TIME OF WAR, AND ASSERTS THAT SUCH A MOVE WOULD BE A "VIOLATION OF SEVERAL INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS, PARTICULARLY THE HAGUE CONVENTION OF 1907 WHICH FORBIDS NEUTRAL COUNTRIES TO SELL ARMS TO COUNTRIES AT WAR."

5. WITHIN SWEDEN, THE LEFTWING OF PRIME MINISTER PALME'S SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY, WHICH AT THE LAST PARTY CONGRESS OPPOSED THE DEVELOPMENT OF ANY SWEDISH SUCCESSOR TO THE VIGGEN IN THE 1980'S, HAS TAKEN A DIM VIEW OF THE GOVERN-MENT'S EFFORT TO EXPORT THE VIGGEN. AN EDITORIAL IN THE FEB. 5 ISSUE OF AFTONBLADET (CONSIDERED TO REPRESENT THE PARTY'S LEFTWING) NOTES THAT THE SCHOLARLY JOURNAL INTERNATIONAL STUDIES RECENTLY OBSERVED THAT "TEN YEARS CONFIDENTIAL

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AGO THE MERE THOUGHT OF SUCH AN AFFAIR (THE EFFORT TO SELL THE VIGGEN TO NATO COUNTRIES) WOULD HAVE BEEN CLUBBED DOWN AS AN ATTEMPT TO TORPEDO OUR ENTIRE NEUTRALITY POLICY." (A-007). THE EDITORIAL GOES ON TO QUESTION SWEDISH EFFORTS TO DEFEND ITSELF MILITARILY, POINTING OUT THAT "WE CANNOT MEET WITH MILITARY RESOURCES THE SUPERPOWERS LATEST ICBM'S, MIRV'S, AND ALL THE OTHER ADVANCED WEAPONS THEY HAVE AT THEIR DISPOSAL. NEITHER THE VIGGEN NOR A FLYGPLAN 80

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WOULD HELP THERE." THE SAME EDITION CARRIED AN ANSWER TO
AFTONBLADET'S CRITICISM BY THE NEW SWEDISH UNDER SECRETARY
OF DEFENSE, ULF LARSSON, WHO INSISTS THAT THE GUARANTEES
SWEDEN WOULD PROVIDE THE NATO COUNTRIES WOULD NOT CONFLICT
WITH SWEDISH NEUTRALITY. AS LARSSON PRASES IT: "THE PROPOSALS
PUT FORWARD BY THE SWEDISH FIRMS IN QUESTION RELATE
TO PRODUCTION OUTSIDE OF SWEDEN ITSELF. AND IF A CERTAIN
PROPORTION OF THE PRODUCTION SHOULD TAKE PLACE HERE, AND
IF WAR SHOULD BREAK OUT (WHICH IS NOT GENERALLY CONSIDERED
PROBABLE), THEN IT MUST BE EXPECTED THAT THE BUYER COUNTRIES
WILL WANT TO HAVE THE PRACTICAL CAPABILITY TO CONTINUE PRODUCTION
ON THEIR OWN."

6. COMMENT: SINCE IT IS GENERALLY CONSIDERED UNLIKELY THAT
THE FOUR NATO COUNTRIES WILL CHOOSE THE VIGGEN AS THE
STARFIGHTER REPLACEMENT OVER THE US OR FRENCH CONTENDERS,
THE SOVIET CONCERN OVER SWEDEN SUPPLYING THE VIGGEN TO
THE NATO COUNTRIES IN TIME OF WAR SEEMS SOMEWHAT OVERDONE.
NEVERTHELESS, THE SOVIET REACTION DOES INDICATE THE
ALERTNESS OF THE SOVIETS TO ANY ACTIONS IMPLYING CLOSER
SWEDISH MILITARY TIES TO THE WEST. ANY DIMINUTION OF SWEDISH
NEUTRALITY WOULD, SUGGEST A WEAKENING OF THE SO-CALLED
"NORDIC BALANCE" CONCEPT UNDER WHICH DANISH AND NORWEGIAN MEMBER-
SHIP IN NATO AND FINLAND'S SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE
USSR ARE BALANCED BY SWEDISH NEUTRALITY. AS INDICATED BY THE
IZVESTIA STATEMENT ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF SWEDISH
NEUTRALITY TO "STABILITY AND PEACE IN NORTHERN EUROPE,"
SUCH A DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE VIEWED UNFAVORABLY BY THE SOVEITS.
STRAUSZ-HUPE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: SALES, MILITARY AIRCRAFT
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 FEB 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: GolinoFR
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STOCKH00642
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750045-0342
From: STOCKHOLM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750260/aaaaccix.tel
Line Count: 144
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: GolinoFR
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2003 by KelleyW0>; APPROVED <22 APR 2003 by GolinoFR>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SWEDISH EFFORTS TO SELL VIGGEN AS F-104 REPLACEMENT CRITICIZED
TAGS: MASS, SW
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006